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TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED / ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US) CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER: P66717US0

US APPLICATION NO (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5): 09/857182

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO	INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE	PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
PCT/EP99/10001	16 December 1999	19 December 1998

TITLE OF INVENTION: MICROPOROUS HEAT INSULATION BODY

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US: Octavian ANTON -and- Ann OPSOMMER

Applicant herein submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information.

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).
4. ☒ A proper Demand for Internatl. Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
   a. ☐ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
   b. ☒ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
   c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US)
6. ☒ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
7. ☒ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
   a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
   b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
   c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
   d. ☒ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
9. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ A translation of the annexes to the Internatl. Preliminary Examination report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11. to 16. below concern other document(s) or information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☒ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A FIRST preliminary amendment.
    ☐ A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A substitute specification.
15. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
16. ☒ Other items or information:

    International Search Report – EPO
    PCT/IB/301 Form
    PCT/IB/304 Form
    PCT/IB/308 Form
    First Page of Publication
    International Preliminary Examination Report – No Annexes

US APPLICATION NO.(if known, see 37 CFR 1.5) 09/857182	INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO PCT/EP99/10001	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER P66717US0

17. ☒ The following fees are submitted:	CALCULATIONS	PTO USE ONLY
Basic National Fee (37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)):		
Internatl. prelim. examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1)) . . $690.00		
No international preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (2)) but international search fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) . . $710.00		
Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (3)) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO) **$1000.00**		
International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (4)) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(2)-(4) $100.00		
Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (5)) **$860.00**		
ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =	$ 1000.00	
Surcharge of $130.00 for furnishing the **oath or declaration** later than ☐ **20** ☐ **30** months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).	$	

Claims	**Number Filed**	**Number Extra**	Rate		
Total Claims	**7** - 20 =	-0-	x $18.00	$	
Independent Claims	**1** - 3 =	-0-	x $80.00	$	
Multiple Dependent Claim(s) (if applicable)			+ $270.00	$	
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =				$ 1000.00	
Reduction by 1/2 for filing by **small entity**, if applicable. Verified Small Entity statement must also be filed. (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).				$	
SUBTOTAL =				$ 1000.00	
Processing fee of $130 for furnishing the **English translation** later than ☐ **20** ☐ **30** months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f))				$	
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =				$ 1000.00	
Fee of $40.00 for recording the enclosed **assignment** (37 CFR 1.21(h)). Assignment must be accompanied by appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31).				$ 40.00	
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =				$ 1040.00	
				Amt. to be refunded:	$
				Amt. charged:	$

a. ☒ A check in the amount of $ 1040.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed.

b. ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. **06-1358** in the amount of $ ____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge my account any additional fees set forth in §1.492 during the pendency of this application, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. **06-1358**. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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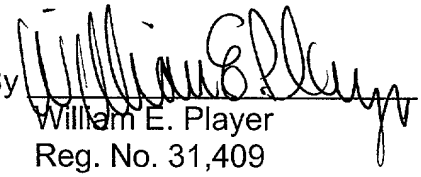
By 
William E. Player
Reg. No. 31,409

JPH&S 3/95

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Octavian ANTON et al

Serial No.: New

Filing Date: June 19, 2001

For: MICROPOROUS HEAT INSULATION BODY

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to initial examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 3-7 as follows:

3. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1, characterized in that said further additives are from 0 to 30 % by weight of an opacificer, from 0 to 10 % by weight of a fibrous material, and from 0 to 15% by weight of an inorganic binder.

4. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1,characterized in that the core contains from 2 to 45% by weight, preferably from 5 to 15% by weight of xonotlite.

5. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1, characterized in that the core has a thickness of from 3 to 10 mm, preferably from 5 to 7 mm.

6. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1, characterized in that the cover is adhered to the core.

7. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1, characterized in that the core and the cover are heat-sealed within a sheet.

REMARKS

The foregoing Preliminary Amendment is requested in order to delete the multiple dependent claims and avoid paying the multiple dependent claims fee.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE.**"

Early action on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOBSON HOLMAN PLLC

By _____
William E. Player
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Atty. Docket: P66717US0
Date: June 19, 2001
WEP:jrc

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

3. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that said further additives are from 0 to 30 % by weight of an opacificer, from 0 to 10 % by weight of a fibrous material, and from 0 to 15% by weight of an inorganic binder.

4. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~, characterized in that the core contains from 2 to 45% by weight, preferably from 5 to 15% by weight of xonotlite.

5. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~, characterized in that the core has a thickness of from 3 to 10 mm, preferably from 5 to 7 mm.

6. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~, characterized in that the cover is adhered to the core.

7. (amended) The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~, characterized in that the core and the cover are heat-sealed within a sheet.

UB

Microporous heat insulation body

The subject matter of the present invention is a microporous heat insulation body consisting of a core of compressed heat insulation material containing from 30 to 90 % by weight of a finely divided metal oxide and further additives, wherein one or both surfaces thereof have a cover from a heat-resistant material.

Heat insulation bodies have been described, e.g., in EP-A-0 618 399, wherein, however, at least one surface of the formed piece is required to have channel pores having pore base areas of from 0.01 to 8 mm^2 and penetration depths of from 5 to 100 %, based on the thickness of the formed piece, and wherein the surface of the formed piece contains from 0.004 to 10 channel pores per 1 cm^2.

Said heat insulation bodies are manufactured by a dry compression and a subsequent sintering at temperatures of from 500 to 900 °C with the channel pores being formed by drilling, punching, or milling and preferably by embossing punches. Due to these measures, it is possible to drain off the steam explosively escaping during the rapid heating such that a decomposition of the heat insulation body can be avoided.

The drawbacks of said heat insulation body are the complicated manufacturing process and the deterioration of the heat insulation properties due to the convection of gases within the pores.

Another process for the manufacturing of a microporous body has been described in EP-A-0 623 567, wherein oxides, hydroxides, and carbonates of the metals of the 2nd main group of the periodic system are compressed together with

pyrogenically manufactured SiO_2 and optionally Al_2O_3 and an opacifier and an organic fiber with each other and then sintered at temperatures exceeding 700 °C. This process is not only complicated but additionally suffers from the drawback that the re-cooling of this well isolating material takes a long time.

Heat insulation bodies prepared with highly heat-resistant adhesives and a slurry, a silica sol and a clay have been described in DE-C-40 20 771. Herein, also additional prior art regarding the manufacturing and composition of heat insulating bodies has been described. The drawback of all heat insulation bodies comprising organic components and in particular organic fibrous material is that said organic components burn at very high temperatures and feature an unwanted evolution of gas.

DE 41 06 727 describes heat insulation bodies having a plastic sheet cover, wherein special shrinkable plastic sheets are to be used. Also these heat insulation bodies still contain organic material and loose their dimensional stability if heated severely.

DE-C-42 02 569 describes moulds for pressing heat insulation bodies, in particular for electrical radiant heaters such as boiling plates.

EP-A-686 732 describes dry-compressed heat insulation plates consisting of different internal and external materials, said materials having stabilizing openings that throughout consist of the external material. Also these plates can be manufactured only in a complicated manner, and neither the mechanical stability nor heat insulating properties thereof are optimal.

Said heat insulation plates have another drawback in that it is difficult to avoid damaging the outer layers during cutting and processing steps unless very expensive tools such as laser cutters are used since said cutters are capable of vitrifying the freshly formed cut edges.

A process for manufacturing primary crystals of the xonotlite type felted and interlaced with each other and the use thereof have been known from DE 36 21 705. The bubble-shaped particles known up to date having a low density have already been used for manufacturing light weight heat insulation bodies. However, even in the compressed state xonotlite crystals do not have the good thermal insulating properties of dry-compressed metal oxides.

Another attempt to solve the problems in the manufacture of heat insulation plates for obtaining optimal properties has been described in EP 0 829 346, where the difficulties and drawbacks of the state of the art have been listed once again.

An important problem in the manufacture of heat insulation bodies by a dry compressing of the components is that these material tend to resile and to re-expand after compressing such that at least high pressures have to be employed in order to achieve results of some use.

Although the bending strength of said heat insulation plates may be improved by adding fibrous material, higher fibre amounts tend to enhance the delamination and to deteriorate the coherence of the compressed mixture during the critical demolding step.

In any case, the heat insulation plates should not contain organic or combustible components which might result in the evolution of partially also toxic gases during a heating to high temperatures. Finally, it should be possible to process the finished heat insulation bodies easily and without any problems, e.g., it should be possible to saw, cut, or drill said bodies without any problems with no unwanted dust being formed.

Finally, the heat insulation bodies are required to be good electrical insulators in many cases. However, there exist uses where it is desired that at least one of the surfaces has an electrical conductivity to be able to dissipate electrostatic charges.

All these problems have been solved by microporous heat insulation bodies consisting of a compressed heat insulation material containing from 30 to 90 % by weight of finely divided metal oxide, from 0 to 30 % by weight of an opacifier, from 0 to 10 % by weight of an inorganic fibrous material, and from 0 to 15 % by weight of an inorganic binder, wherein the body additionally contains from 2 to 45 % by weight, preferably from 5 to 15 % by weight of xonotlite. Said heat insulation bodies are the subject matter of DE 198 59 084.9.

Preferably, said microporous heat insulation body has a cover of a heat-resistant material on one or both surfaces thereof. Especially preferred are covers which are the same or different and consist of rough-pressed xonotlite, prefabricated mica or graphite sheets. With the use of xonotlite and/or mica covers being good electrical insulators are formed. With the use of graphite there is formed a cover which has a conductivity enabling at least the dissipation of electrical charges. Thus, in certain uses it may be advantageous to form one side of the cover from xonotlite and/or mica and the other cover from graphite.

Now, it has been established that covering porous heat insulation bodies with prefabricated mica sheets considerably improves the properties of heat insulation bodies in two different ways, that is, with regard to the thermal conductivity as well as the mechanical properties, in particular the bending strength. At first, this has been established with internal tests of the microporous heat insulation bodies according to DE 198 59 084.9. However, in addition to this it has been established that a covering with prefabricated mica sheets considerably improves other microporous heat insulation bodies as well. Thus, the subject matter of the present invention is a microporous heat insulation body consisting of a core of compressed heat insulation material containing from 30 to 90 % by weight of finely divided metal oxide and further additives, wherein one or both surfaces thereof have a cover of a heat-resistant material, characterized in that the covers are the same or different and at least one side consists of prefabricated mica sheets.

Preferably, the cover consists of a prefabricated mica sheet on both sides.

The core, in turn, preferably contains from 0 to 30 % by weight of an opacifier, from 0 to 10 % by weight of a fibrous material, and from 0 to 15 % by weight of an inorganic binder with an inorganic fibrous material being preferred.

Above all, the improved mechanical properties become apparent in heat insulation bodies having a distinct flexibility due to the thickness thereof. Thus, heat insulation bodies having a thickness of from 3 to 10 mm, preferably from 5 to 7 mm, are especially preferred.

Moreover, heat insulation bodies wherein the cover is adhered to the core have been proved especially efficient. As adhesives, both inorganic adhesives such as water glass and organic adhesives such as polyvinyl acetate are possible. When heating the finished microporous heat insulation bodies, the low amounts of processed organic substance do practically not impair the properties of said material.

In principle, it is possible to heat-seal the core and the mica sheets together within a film, in particular a shrink film, instead of adhering them. Such microporous heat insulation bodies also have an improved heat insulation, an improved mechanical stability and a better bending strength than the products according to, e.g., EP-A-0 829 346.

The invention will be illustrated in more detail in the following examples and comparative examples.

Example 1

A mixture of 63 % by weight of pyrogenic silicic acid, 30 % by weight of rutile, 2 % by weight of silicate fibres (6 mm in length), and 5 % by weight of synthetic xonotlite were dry-mixed in a compulsory mixer and then dry-compressed in a metal mould with the pressing pressure varying between 0.9 and 7.0 MPa. This way plates having densities between 300 and 560 kg/m^3 were obtained. The

bending strength varied between 0.1 MPa and 0.8 MPa as a function of the density. The values are illustrated in Figure 1.

Furthermore, the lambda values (thermal conductivity in W/(m °K)) as a function of the temperature were determined employing a isolated hot plate according to DIN 52 612.

The above-mentioned plates were coated with a 0.1 mm thick mica sheet on both sides and adhered with a commercial organic adhesive on the basis of PVA (polyvinyl acetate). The mica sheets are a commercial product of the Cogebi company, Belgium.

The plates thus obtained were tested for bending strength and thermal conductivity. The results are summarized in the following tables and illustrated in Figures 1 and 2:

Reference example		Sandwich containing a mica sheet of 0.1 mm	
Density (kg/m^3)	Bending strength (MPa)	Density (kg/m^3)	Bending strength (MPa)
300	0.10	298	0.43
387	0.19	379	0.80
382	0.23	412	1.10
344	0.10		
424	0.25		
560	0.80		

Reference example		Sandwich containing a mica sheet of 0.1 mm	
Temperature (°C)	λ (W/(m °K)	Temperature (°C)	λ (W/(m °K)
20	0.026	220	0.025
200	0.028	620	0.034
600	0.040	400	0.028
800	0.048		

Claims

1. A microporous heat insulation body consisting of a core of a compressed heat insulation material containing from 30 to 90 % by weight of a finely divided metal oxide and further additives, wherein one or both surfaces thereof have a cover of a heat-resistant material, characterized in that the covers are the same or different and at least one side consists of prefabricated mica sheets.

2. The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1, characterized in that the cover consists of a prefabricated mica sheet on both sides.

3. The microporous heat insulation body according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that said further additives are from 0 to 30 % by weight of an opacifier, from 0 to 10 % by weight of a fibrous material, and from 0 to 15 % by weight of an inorganic binder.

4. The microporous heat insulation body according to any one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the core contains from 2 to 45 % by weight, preferably from 5 to 15 % by weight of xonotlite.

5. The microporous heat insulation body according to any one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the core has a thickness of from 3 to 10 mm, preferably from 5 to 7 mm.

6. The microporous heat insulation body according to any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the cover is adhered to the core.

7. The microporous heat insulation body according to any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the core and the cover are heat-sealed within a sheet.

Abstract

The microporous heat insulation body consists of a core of a compressed heat insulation material containing from 30 to 90 % by weight of a finely divided metal oxide and further additives, wherein one or both surfaces thereof have a cover of a heat-resistant material and where the covers are the same or different and at least one side consists of prefabricated mica sheets.

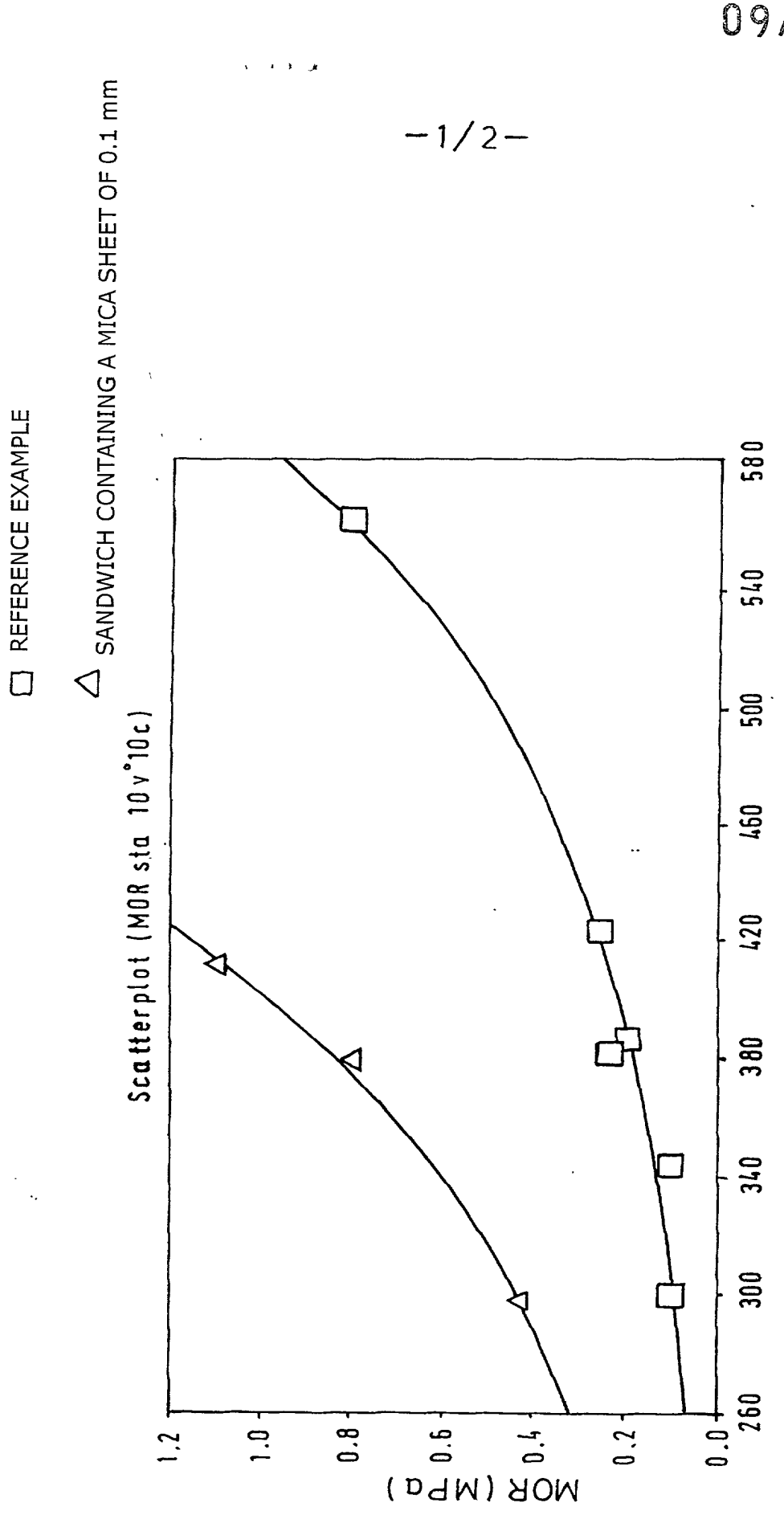
REFERENCE EXAMPLE
SANDWICH CONTAINING A MICA SHEET OF 0.1 mm
Scatterplot (MOR sta 10v*10c)
MOR (MPa)
1.2
1.0
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
260
300
340
380
420
460
500
540
580
Density (kg/m³)

FIG.1

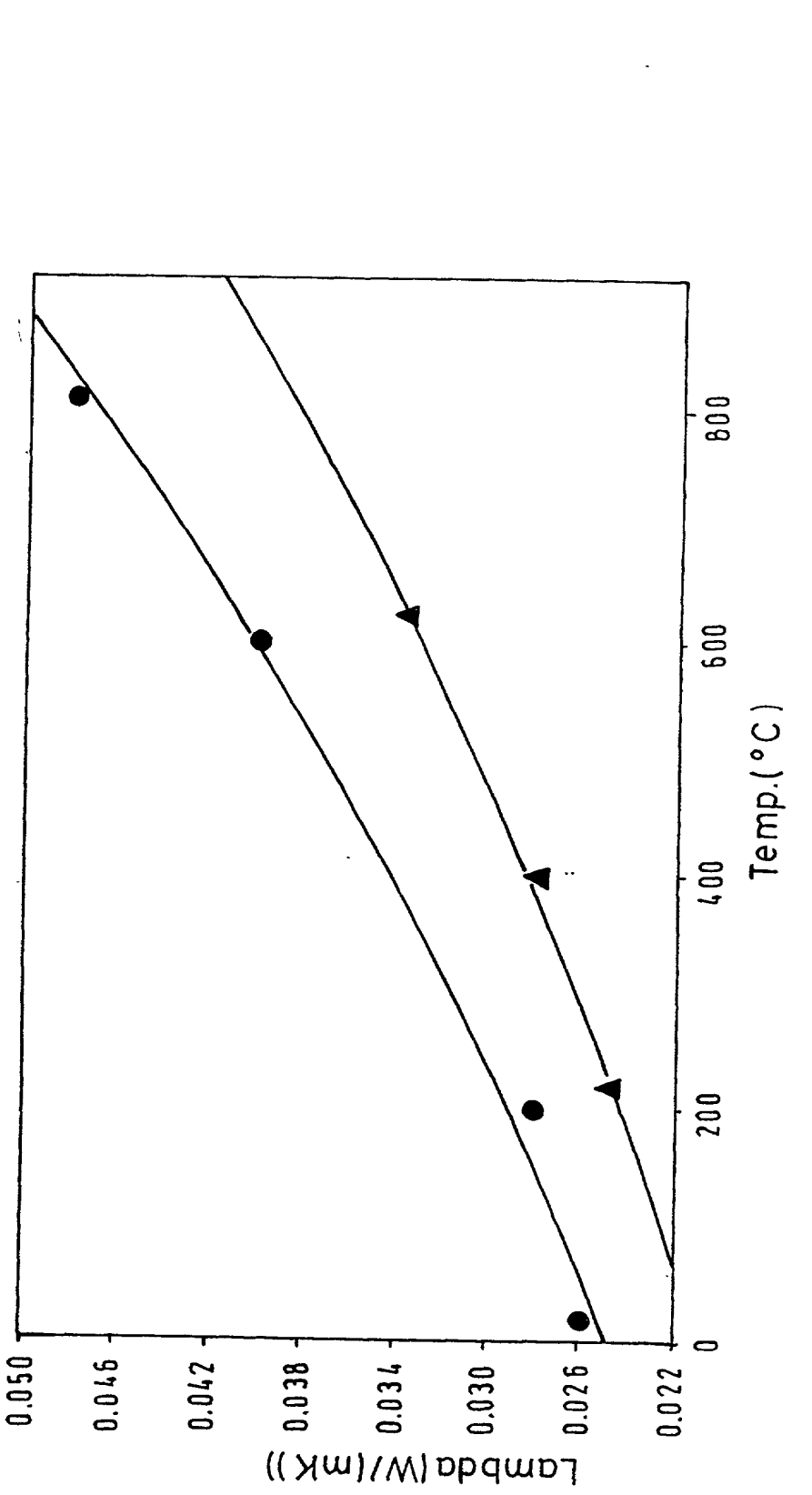
REFERENCE EXAMPLE
SANDWICH CONTAINING A MICA SHEET OF 0.1 mm
Lambda (W/(mK))
0.050
0.046
0.042
0.038
0.034
0.030
0.026
0.022
0
200
400
600
800
Temp.(°C)

FIG.2

010989us

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY U.S.A.

ALL PATENTS, INCLUDING DESIGN
FOR APPLICATION BASED ON PCT; PARIS CONVENTION;
NON PRIORITY; OR PROVISIONAL APPLICATIONS

FOR ATTORNEYS' USE ONLY

ATTORNEYS' DOCKET NO.

101 As a below named inventor, I declare that my residence, post office address and citizenship are stated below next to my name, the information given herein is true, that I believe that I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed at 201 below), or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural inventors are named below at 201-203, or on additional sheets attached hereto) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which patent is sought on the invention entitled:

102 Microporous heat insulation body

which is described and claimed in:

☐ the attached specification

☐ PCT International Application No. PCT/EP 99/10001 filed 16/12/1999

☐ the specification in application Serial No. _____ filed _____

(if applicable) and amended on _____

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.
I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56.
I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 (a)-(d) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

103 Prior Foreign Application(s)

(Number)	(Country)	(Day/Month/Year Filed)	Priority Claimed Yes	No
198 59 084.9	Germany	19/12/1998	☒	☐
199 50 051.7	Germany	16/10/1999	☒	☐
			☐	☐

104 I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

Application No. _____ Filing Date _____ Application No. _____ Filing Date _____

105 I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

(Application Serial No.)	(Filing Date)	(Status: patented, pending, abandoned)

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorneys (Registration No.) to prosecute this application, receive and act on instructions from my agent, and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. HARVEY B. JACOBSON, JR. (20,851); D. DOUGLAS PRICE (24,514); JOHN CLARKE HOLMAN (22,769); MARVIN R. STERN (20,640); ALLEN S. MELSER (27,215); MICHAEL R. SLOBASKY (26,421); JONATHAN L. SCHERER (29,851); IRWIN M. AISENBERG (19,007); WILLIAM E. PLAYER (31,409); YOON S. HAM (45,307) and NATHANIEL A. HUMPHRIES (22,772)

SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:	DIRECT TELEPHONE CALLS TO:
CUSTOMER NO. 00136 or **JACOBSON, PRICE, HOLMAN & STERN** PROFESSIONAL LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY 400 SEVENTH STREET, N.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004	(please use Attorney's Docket No.) (202) 638-6666 **JACOBSON, PRICE, HOLMAN & STERN** PROFESSIONAL LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY

*Inventor(s) name must include at least one unabbreviated first or middle name.

201 FULL NAME * OF INVENTOR	FAMILY NAME: ANTON	GIVEN NAME: Octavian	MIDDLE NAME		
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POST OFFICE ADDRESS	POST OFFICE ADDRESS: Ave. Des Pagodes 358	CITY: Brüssel	STATE OR COUNTRY: Belgium	ZIP CODE: 1020	
202 FULL NAME * OF INVENTOR	FAMILY NAME: OPSOMMER	GIVEN NAME: Ann	MIDDLE NAME		
RESIDENCE & CITIZENSHIP	CITY: Koningslo BEX	STATE OR FOREIGN COUNTRY: Belgium	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP: Belgium		
POST OFFICE ADDRESS	POST OFFICE ADDRESS: Sint Annalaan 120	CITY: Koningslo	STATE OR COUNTRY: Belgium	ZIP CODE: 1800	
203 FULL NAME * OF INVENTOR	FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	MIDDLE NAME		
RESIDENCE & CITIZENSHIP	CITY	STATE OR FOREIGN COUNTRY	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP		
POST OFFICE ADDRESS	POST OFFICE ADDRESS	CITY	STATE OR COUNTRY	ZIP CODE	

I further declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code; and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR 201*	SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR 202*	SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR 203*
DATE 09 MAY 2001	DATE 09 May 2001	DATE

☐ Additional inventors are named on separately numbered sheets attached hereto.